

**PERCEPTUAL LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCES AND LANGUAGE
LEARNING STRATEGIES OF ESL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

PERCEPTUAL LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCES AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES OF ESL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

The overall objective of this study is to determine the perceptual learning style preferences, the learning strategies and the relationship between the perceptual learning styles and learning strategies of Malay ESL (English as a Second Language) university students in Malaysia. The survey method and case studies were used in this research. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and interviews. The respondents for this study comprised 137 students from three fields of study namely, Business Management, Secretarial Science and Computer Science. The results of the study showed that the respondents had major preferences for kinesthetic, tactile, group and auditory learning styles with kinesthetic being the most preferred learning style. They had minor preferences for visual and individual learning styles. Age, gender, duration of study and language proficiency were found to be related to perceptual learning styles of the respondents.

The respondents were high level users of metacognitive, social and compensation learning strategies. The respondents were found to be medium level users of the memory, cognitive and affective learning strategies. The respondents' selection of learning strategies seemed to be influenced by age, gender, duration of studying the English Language and field of study. The study

showed that certain perceptual learning styles are related to particular learning strategies.

In addition to the survey, three students with different perceptual learning style preferences were selected as participants in the case studies. Among the conclusions drawn from the case studies were that respondents who rated themselves as having major preferences for all the learning styles were more proficient in the language and use more effective learning strategies compared to those who had minor preferences for some or all the learning styles. Certain background variables of the cases were found to influence strategy choice. The findings of this study has implications for the development of ESL curricula, teaching methods and teaching materials. Among the recommendations suggested are strategy training for students, use of grouping strategies in the classrooms and the use of multimedia in ESL learning.

ABSTRAK

GAYA PEMBELAJARAN PERSEPSI DAN STRATEGI PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA PELAJAR-PELAJAR ESL DI UNIVERSITI

Objektif keseluruhan kajian ini ialah untuk menentukan persepsi pilihan gaya pembelajaran persepsi, strategi pembelajaran dan hubungan antara keduanya bagi sampel pelajar yang mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua di sebuah universiti di Malaysia. Kaedah tinjauan digunakan dalam kajian ini ialah soal selidik berstruktur dan kajian kes digunakan untuk mengumpul data.

Responden kajian terdiri daripada 137 pelajar daripada tiga bidang kursus iaitu Pengurusan Perniagaan, Sains Kesetiausahaan dan Sains Komputer. Tiga pelajar yang mempunyai gaya pembelajaran yang berbeza dipilih untuk kajian kes. Dapatan kajian ini telah menunjukkan bahawa gaya pembelajaran jenis *kinesthetic*, *tactile*, kumpulan dan *auditory* merupakan pilihan major responden kajian dan *kinesthetic* merupakan gaya pembelajaran yang paling digemari oleh mereka. Gaya pembelajaran *visual* dan individu merupakan pilihan minor mereka.

Responden kajian telah menggunakan strategi pembelajaran jenis *metacognitive*, *social* dan *compensation* pada aras yang tinggi. Mereka menggunakan strategi pembelajaran jenis *memory*, *cognitive* dan *affective* pada aras sederhana. Terdapat perhubungan yang signifikan antara umur, jantina,

tempoh masa mereka mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris dan kecekapan dalam Bahasa Inggeris dengan gaya pembelajaran persepsi. Strategi yang dipilih oleh responden kajian untuk mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris dipengaruhi oleh umur, jantina, tempoh masa mereka mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris dan bidang kajian mereka.

Kajian kes telah menunjukkan bahawa responden kajian yang telah memilih semua gaya pembelajaran persepsi sebagai gaya pembelajaran major, merupakan pelajar yang paling cekap dalam Bahasa Inggeris. Dia juga dapat menggunakan strategi pembelajaran yang lebih efektif. Beberapa variabel peribadi responden kajian juga mempengaruhi pemilihan strategi pembelajaran. Dapatan kajian ini memberi implikasi kepada perkembangan kurikulum dan kaedah pengajaran dan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris sebagai Bahasa Kedua. Antara cadangan yang disarankan dalam kajian ini ialah memberi pelajar latihan dalam penggunaan strategi pembelajaran yang efektif, penggunaan kaedah kumpulan dan multimedia.

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